

EXPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR IRELAND

ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE PRODUCTS

A. ELIGIBLE PRODUCTS

1. EEC Requirements

- a. Fresh/Frozen meat and offal (edible organs) derived from cattle, calves, swine, treatment other than cold treatment to ensure preservation are eligible (amenable) for export to the European Union (EU) under the requirements established for nonmember countries, the Third Country Directive (TCD).

A "Guideline for the Production of Fresh Meat Intended for Export to the European Union" has been developed and is available through the Export Requirement Library or by request from the FSIS Technical Service Center - (402) 221-7400. This guideline outlines the requirements that FSIS inspected slaughter, cutting, and cold storage facilities must satisfy in order to be approved for export to the EU. Exporters are advised to check the individual member states' documentation requirements for additional certification requirements specific to the country for products amenable to the TCD.

b. Definitions

- (1) Edible products originating from species other than those mentioned above (e.g., poultry and processed products including ground products) are not amenable to TCD, and therefore are amenable to the requirements of the individual member states.
- (2) Edible products for animal food, pharmaceutical or other industrial purposes and inedible products are not amenable to the requirements of the TCD and therefore are amenable to the requirements of the individual member states.
- (3) Military shipments are not amenable to the TCD and therefore are amenable to the requirements of the individual member states.

2. Irish Requirements.

a. Meat Products are eligible for export to Ireland

b. Cooked poultry products are eligible for export to Ireland. Product must be heated to an internal temperature of not less than 70° C (158° F). Poultry must be slaughtered in facilities that comply with the requirements outlined herein.

c. The same conditions apply to raw material for manufacture of pet food as for meat for human consumption. *

B. INELIGIBLE PRODUCTS

1. Meat from certain animals (boars and cryptorchid pigs; animals with cysticercosis; and with any form of tuberculosis) may not be exported to the EEC.

2. Fresh poultry products.

3. Poultry products (edible or inedible) intended for use in pet food may not be exported to Ireland.

FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Plants desiring to export poultry or further processed meat or poultry products must meet the following requirements:

1. Facilities and Equipment

a. Floors must be laid in such a way to facilitate drainage and to avoid pooling of water.

b. Waste water from equipment must be conveyed in covered channels to drains fitted with traps and gratings or fitted with proper plumbing directly to the waste disposal system.

c. Walls must be smooth, durable, impermeable, light colored, and washable at least to storage height in coolers, up to 10 feet in slaughter rooms and up to 6-1/2 feet in rooms where fresh meat is produced.

d. Walls and tight fitting doors are required to separate edible and inedible areas, raw and cooked product areas, cut up and packaging areas, processing and loading areas, and welfare and toilet areas.

- e. The wall/floor junction must be easily cleanable.
- f. Wood is not allowed in exposed product areas. This includes its use in equipment and instruments such as wooden pallets, knives, cutting boards, containers, saws, brooms, etc.
- g. Facilities are required for protection of meat from weather conditions during loading and unloading.
- h. Recording thermometers are required for cut up, boning, packaging, and frozen storage rooms or whenever ambient room temperatures must be controlled. Recording thermometers are not required in coolers not used for storage.
- i. Employee welfare facilities must include lockers or alternate devices for storing employees' outer garments. Shower facilities for each sex must also be provided. Separate dining facilities must be provided to discourage eating in locker rooms.
- j. Toilet rooms must not open directly into work rooms.
- k. Adequate number of hand-washing facilities throughout the plant must be other-than-hand operated and supplied with hot and cold water. In operation areas, hand-washing facilities must be located near work stations.
- l. Adequate number of sanitizers, with a water temperature not less than 180°F., must be conveniently located where hand tools are used.
- m. Product containers must not be stored directly on floor surfaces.
- n. Plant management is responsible for controlling employees and visitors entering and exiting plant premises i.e., perimeter fence.

2. Cutting Rooms

- a. During further processing, wrapping, and packaging, the internal temperature of the meat must not exceed 44.6°F(+7°C) and temperature of offal must not exceed 37.4°F(+3°C). Meat and offal subjected to freezing (frozen storage) are not required to meet these temperatures. During cutting, the temperature of the cutting room must not exceed 53.6°F (+12°C).
- b. Operations in cutting rooms must be confined to cutting, boning, wrapping or packaging.

SLAUGHTER REQUIREMENTS

Poultry

1. Pre-slaughter stunning is required (an exception is permitted for religious purposes).
2. Hand-washing facility is required in hanging area.
3. The stunning and bleeding area must be separated from the hang-on bay for live birds.
4. Hand-washing facility and sanitizer is required in bleeding area.
5. Cutting/deboning operations must be physically separated (by a wall or solid partition extending from floor to ceiling) from eviscerating, giblet processing and immersion chilling operations.
6. Immersion chilling of carcasses must comply with the following:
 - a. Immersion chilling system shall be a true counterflow, that is, carcasses must move through the chiller against the flow of the water.
 - b. Potable water shall enter the carcass exit and overflow at the carcass entrance end of chiller.
 - c. The carcasses must pass through one or more tanks of water or of ice and water the contents of which are continuously renewed. Only the system whereby the carcasses are constantly propelled by mechanical means through a counterflow of water is acceptable.
 - d. There shall be two temperature recording devices for recording the chill media temperature, one at the carcass entry end and one at the carcass exit end of the chiller. The chill media temperature shall not exceed 61oF. at the carcass entry end and 40oF. at the carcass exit end.
 - e. There shall be a water meter on the chilling system and a water meter on the final washer.
 - f. Listed below is the amount of water required per bird.

Washer	Chiller	Bird Size RTC
0.40 gal.	0.65 gal.	Up to 5.5 lbs.
0.65 gal.	1.00 gal.	5.5 to 11 lbs.
0.90 gal	1.50 gal.	Over 11 lbs.
 - g. Water requirements for final washer are calculated and recorded in the same manner as presently done for the chiller.

h. Since poultry slaughter plants may have to alter their operating practices when producing product for the EU, it will be necessary that plant officials notify inspection personnel in advance of producing product for export to the EU or for cutup at another certified plant. Plant officials at the slaughter plant must also identify and ship the product to the cutup plant in a manner acceptable to the USDAS Inspector In Charge. The alterations should include a check to see that metering devices are functioning properly and that a record of the water usage is maintained.

i. Slaughter plants may wish to look into utilizing a procedure whereby clean eviscerated poultry is cut or boned in the hot state without subjecting it to immersion chilling. Movement of poultry carcasses direct from slaughter line to cutting room for immediate cutup, packaging, and subsequent chilling is acceptable. Slaughter plants also may wish to consider cooking whole birds, parts or boneless poultry immediately after post-mortem inspection in lieu of immersion chilling.

LABELING REQUIREMENTS

EU Health Marks. Health marks should be applied to both red meat and poultry products destined to Ireland.

1. The health mark must be an oval mark applied to labels, packaging materials, and carcass product at least 6.5 cm wide by 4.5 cm high bearing the following information:

a. On the upper part, the name of the consigning country in capitals - USA

b. In the center, the establishment number, for example, the number 38.

c. The letters must be at least 0.8 cm high and the figures at least 1 cm high.

2. Labels that contain the official oval health mark must be serially numbered. Printing of serial numbers on labels may be done on a plant basis.

3. Labels must be applied to packaging in such a manner that the official oval health mark on the labeling is destroyed when the package is opened.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

A. EU Requirements. Certification requirements for products amenable to the TCD are in the "Guideline for the Production of Fresh Meat Intended for Export to the European Union."

B. Irish Requirements for Meat and Poultry Products

1. Signature on certificates. All required forms and supplementary statements must be dated and signed by a veterinarian. Name, degree, (DVM or equivalent) must be typed or printed after signature.
2. Certification Requirements
 - a. Meat Products (including tallow). Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5.
 - b. Poultry Products. Obtain FSIS Form 9060-5 and FSIS Form 9270-1 (Health Certificate for Poultry Meat for Export to Ireland.)
3. Special Permit/License: It is the importer's responsibility to obtain all required licenses and permits from Irish officials for entry of product into Ireland.
4. Casings: Obtain FSIS Form 9180-7(4/97), Animal Health Certificate for Animal Casings Intended for Dispatch to the European Community.
5. Special Statements
 - a. Tallow. The following information must be typed on the reverse side of the FSIS Form 9060-5: "The animals from which tallow was derived originated from (country), from (species) animals, was subjected to a temperature of (degree Centigrade) for a period of (number of) minutes in (the country)".
 - b. Poultry Products. Canned Product. For hermetically sealed product, the following statement must be placed under "remarks": "The poultry products mentioned herein have been subjected, during the course of manufacture, to a temperature of 116oC for a period of 75 minutes at the factory."

C. Inedible/Edible Product for Animal Food

1. Meat Plants exporting raw material for animal food to Ireland must be approved according to EU Guidelines. *
2. Poultry products intended for animal food are not eligible for export to

Ireland.

HANDLING/STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

Wrapping and Packaging

1. Receiving and Storing of Wrapping and Packaging Materials.
 - a. Wrapping and packaging materials must be transported with sufficient protective covering to assure a hygienic condition when arriving at the establishment.
 - b. Storage rooms for packaging material must be dust- and vermin-free and must not contain substances that might contaminate fresh meat or have air connection with rooms containing substances that might contaminate fresh meat.
 - c. Packaging materials must not be stored on the floor.
2. Assembling and Transferring of Boxes.
 - a. Under hygienic conditions, boxes must be assembled in a separate room and be transferred into the production room and used progressively.
 - b. Assembled boxes must be managed in a manner which prevents contamination of the product contact surfaces.
3. Packaging Product
 - a. Packaging should be done in a separate room. However, cutting, boning, wrapping, and packaging operations may take place in the same room provided that the room is sufficiently large and so arranged that the hygiene of the operation is assured.
 - b. Boxes may not be assembled in an exposed meat area or handled by staff handling fresh meat.
 - c. The reuse of shipping containers is prohibited.
 - d. Immediately after packaging, the meat must be placed in the storage rooms.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. Staff Hygiene and Dress

1. Workers must wear recognizable, protective clothing and water resistant footwear. Protective clothing must be other than street clothing. Headgear and neck shields must be worn by employees when necessary. Plant management must encourage acceptable work habits.
2. Employees handling meat must have a record of an annual certification by a physician as being medically fit to handle food (showing no signs or symptoms of a communicable disease).

B. Water Testing Requirements

1. The initial water testing requirements are as follows:

Test || Sample size: || Temperature: || Maximum concentration

Total Coliform || 100 ml || 37 C || Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1

Fecal coliform || 100 ml || 37 C || Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1

Fecal streptococci || 100 ml || 37 C || Membrane filter - 0 or MPN < 1

Sulphite-reducing clostridia || 20 ml || 37 C || MPN < 1

Total Plate count || 1 ml || 37 C || Guide level - 10

Total Plate count || 1 ml || 22 C || Guide level - 100

2. Subsequent water testing

a. Frequency:

(1) Annually, if municipal source of water and no intermediate storage in the plant.

(2) Monthly, if private source of water or intermediate storage is used.

b. Two examinations are required:

(1) Total plate count at 37 C and 22 C incubated for a minimum of 72 hours.

(2) and total coliform at 37 C incubated for a minimum of 48 hours.

3. Sampling
 - a. Samples must be taken from randomly selected water taps within the establishments.
 - b. A diagram of tap locations and log of which taps have been sampled should also be maintained.
4. Test results. If test results are not within the required parameters, immediate retesting must be done. Contact Export Coordination Division for retest information.
5. Chlorination testing. A daily chlorination test is required if private water is used and chlorination is required for potability.

PLANTS ELIGIBLE TO EXPORT

A. Plant Approval

1. Poultry slaughter/processing plants which desire to apply for approval to export to Ireland must meet Ireland requirements. Nominations for final review must be initiated by plant management via a letter of intent to the Director, Export Coordination Division, International Programs. A representative from ECD will review the facility. Once assurances are provided that the requirements have been met, ECD will certify the plant to the Irish Department of Agriculture and Food as being eligible to ship to Ireland.
2. Casings--Casings must originate from an EU approved casing facility.
3. Pet Food - Raw Material for Pet food must be from EU approved facilities.*
4. Sample products for research or exhibition originating from plants not approved for export to Ireland must submit an application form to the Irish Department of Agriculture for an import license.

B. List of Eligible Plants

The list of Approved Plants for Cooked Poultry Products are updated periodically. These lists are available through the computerized Export Requirements Library database. A printed copy may be obtained from ECD.